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**ABSTRACT**

Carboxylic acids, ketones, and esters having improved color characteristics are produced by combining small quantities of water with these compounds. An amount of water ranging from about 100 ppm to about 50,000 ppm of the organic compound is combined to provide lighter color compounds in comparison to these same compounds to which no water is added.

10 Additionally, the color characteristics of the organic compounds may be improved by introducing a stream of the organic compound into at least one distillation column maintained at a temperature of about 23° C to about 250° C and at a pressure of about 10.1 kPa to about 202.6 kPa. Subjecting the organic compound stream to distillation under these conditions allows

15 precursors of color bodies, having boiling points lower than the boiling point of the product being produced, to thermally breakdown or to be removed in the overhead stream from the distillation column.